

U.S.S.N. 10/766,099

Inventor(s): Mashiba

Attorney Docket No. 60707 (49321)

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Amendments to the Drawings

Please amend the drawings by replacing Figure 3 and Figure 8 with the enclosed replacement drawings wherein the spelling of "TRANSPORT" is corrected on Fig. 3 and the spelling of "TEMPERATURE" is corrected on Fig. 8. No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 5 are pending in the subject application. Claims 1 and 4 stand rejected and objection is made to claims 2, 3 and 5. Applicants appreciate the acknowledgement of patentable subject matter, at least in claims 2, 3 and 5.

The Examiner objected to the title of the invention as non-descriptive. Applicants hereby submit a new title for the invention.

Objection is made to the drawings in view of the misspelling of terms on figures 3 and 8. These figures have been amended to correct the spelling. No new matter is added.

Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Shirashi (US 6,148,159). Shirashi discloses an electrophotographic printer having a plurality of transferring devices, each opposed to a plurality of image bearing bodies. "Each of the transferring devices selectively receives a first voltage (i.e., transfer voltage v_a) and a second voltage (i.e., non-transfer voltage v_b) supplied thereto. The first voltage is received when an image of a corresponding color is being transferred . . . to the print medium. The second voltage is received when the image of the corresponding color is **not** being transferred . . . to the print medium." [Col. 2, lines 12-20; emphasis added.] Thus, a voltage is always being applied to each of the transfer devices; only the magnitude changes depending upon whether transfer is occurring.

However, in the present invention, as set forth in claim 1, "the voltage applying device, when a transfer process is **not** performed, **applies** a non-transfer bias voltage to **only** the transfer electrode **in contact** with the image carrier."

Shirashi *fails* to teach or suggest that no bias voltage should be applied to the transfer electrode when the electrode is not in contact with the image carrier.

Indeed, with reference to FIG. 9, Shirashi explains that a leakage currents (m_1 and c_1) can flow through the print medium from transfer rollers in touch with the print medium when the image is not being transferred. [See Col. 9, lines 10-31] This results from a non-transfer bias voltage being applied to the transfer device even when it is not in contact with the image carrier. Shirashi handles this current by electrically connecting metal guide plate 55 to the shaft of heat roller 52 and connecting a Zener diode 54 between ground and the guide plate, "thereby neutralizing the print medium 19 through the guide metal plate 55." [See, Col 8, lines 60-67.]

Thus, it is not seen how the present invention is anticipated by Shirashi. Further, it is not seen how the present invention would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of Shirashi.

In view of the discussion above it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early reconsideration and notice of allowance are earnestly solicited.

Applicants believe that no extension of time is required. Applicants, however, conditionally petition for an extension of time to provide for the possibility that such a petition has been inadvertently overlooked and is required. As provided below, charge Deposit Account **04-1105** for any required fee.

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Customer No. 21874

Respectfully submitted,

George W. Neuner

Reg. No. 26,694

Edwards Angell Palmer & Dodge LLP

P.O. Box 55874

Boston, MA 02205

(617) 439-4444 (phone)

(617) 439-4170 (fax)

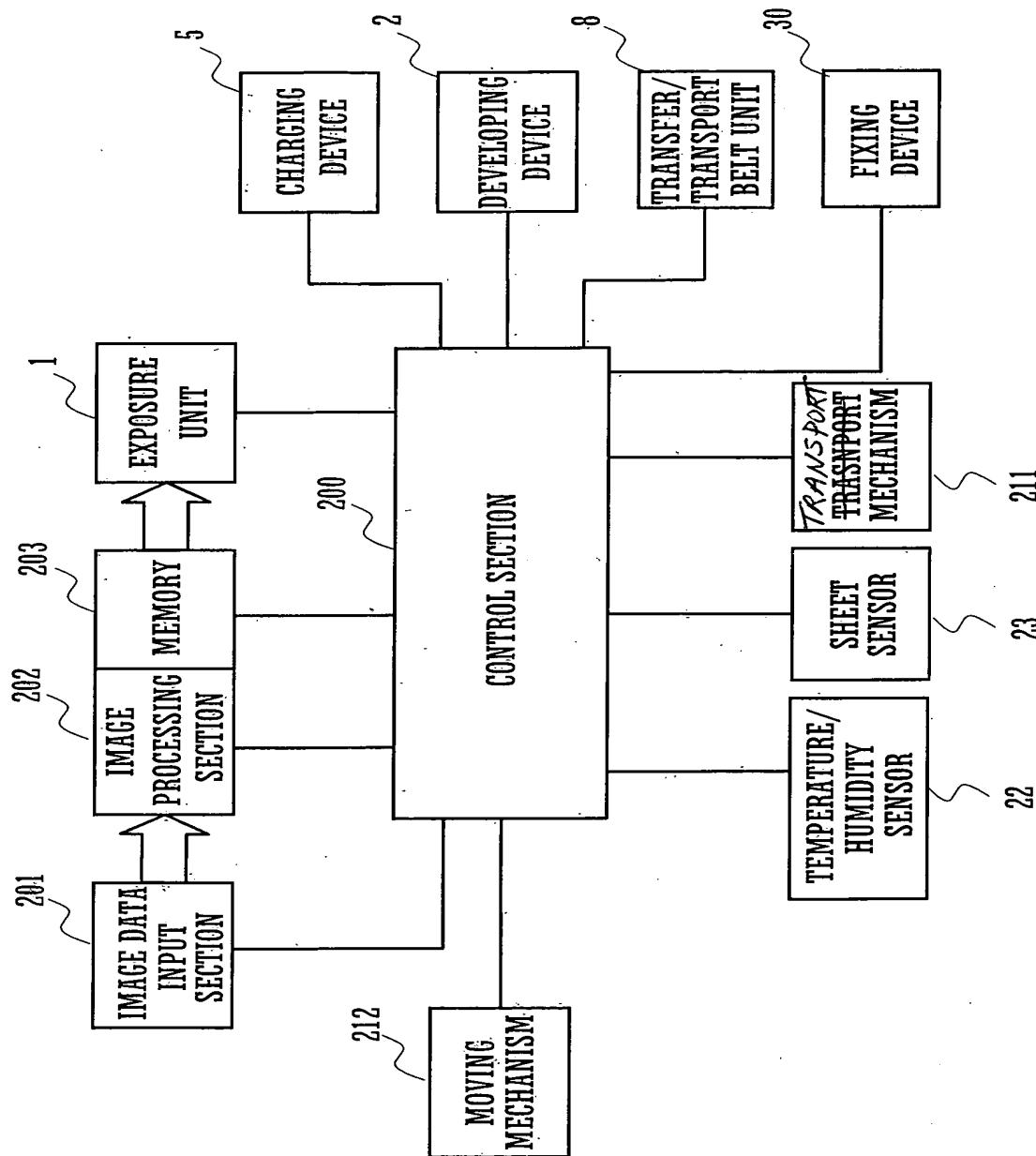


FIG. 3

		TEMPERATURE (°C)						
		≤ 10	≤ 15	≤ 17.5	≤ 20	≤ 22.5	≤ 25	≤ 27.5
RELATIVE HUMIDITY (%)	≤ 10							
	≤ 20				+200V			
	≤ 30							
	≤ 40							
	≤ 50				+250V			
	≤ 60							
	≤ 70							
	≤ 80						+300V	
	> 80							

FIG. 8